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5 September 1958

MEMORANDUM OF INFORMATION

SUBJECT: Analysis of Bloc Radio Broadcasts, Newspapers, and Periodicals.

Reference: IAC-M-356, 12 August 1958, Item 2b; IAC-M-357 19 August, Item 1.

Materials Available

1. Radio Broadcasts. These are monitored, translated, and a generous selection printed and disseminated in the [REDACTED] Coverage of Radio Moscow and Radio Peiping is described as "virtually exhaustive"; of Soviet and Chinese Communist regional radio broadcasts, and of East European and Far East Satellite stations, as "selective". The Daily Report is voluminous. Spot items of special interest are rapidly made available by teletype to interested recipients [REDACTED]

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2. Newspapers and Periodicals. There is "virtually exhaustive" coverage of the output of TASS and of the New China News Agency. Considerable numbers of Soviet and European Satellite newspapers and periodicals are available; for example the State Department research people receive 39 Soviet newspapers, 97 Soviet journals, 42 Eastern European newspapers, and 127 Eastern European journals. The supply of Chinese Communist printed materials is still comparatively scanty: out of some 800 newspapers

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published in Communist China in 1957 only about 70 were available in Hong Kong on a fairly regular basis, and the [ ] reported in July 1957 a list of 18 which it exploited. We are still considerably dependent on radio rebroadcasts of Chinese Communist press materials.

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Methods of Analysis

3. It is convenient to distinguish three ways of using these materials:

(a) Ordinary reading by intelligence analysts. This is a rather cavalier designation for what is certainly the principal method of extracting intelligence from these materials. Needless to say, many intelligence analysts spend a good deal of their time in studying, clipping, and filing the contents of newspapers, journals, and the [ ] It is worth remarking, as an example of the esteem in which these materials are held, that IRA's Division of Research and Analysis for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe considers them to be its most important single source of information.

(b) Research projects - into some particular problem or subject as treated in Bloc radio, newspaper or other published materials,

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past and present. All intelligence analysts do a good deal of this in the course of their work, and indeed the significance of any Bloc utterance can seldom be evaluated properly except in relation to previous Bloc utterances. But there are also various research projects of large scale, such as some of those done by the Rand Corporation or by Russian Research Centers at universities, or by individual scholars. Extensive projects are peculiarly suited to be carried out under the auspices of universities, or by such organizations as Rand.

(c) "Content analysis". This phrase is here loosely used to mean the systematic analysis of radio, newspaper and journalistic materials, day by day, as a full-time and specialized job. More narrowly, "content analysis", or "propaganda analysis", involves the application of special analytical techniques to propaganda and policy materials, by persons who have special training in the study of communications.

Content analysis is conducted at present only by the [redacted]  
[redacted] where about 15 professionals currently  
work at the job. This Branch reports its findings in various

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special papers, and regularly in two periodicals - a three-page weekly [ ] and a more detailed bi-weekly [ ]

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General Remarks

4. There would probably be no dissent to the proposition that analysis of the contents of radio broadcasts, newspapers and journals from the Bloc is one of the most vital aspects of intelligence work. It is of peculiar importance in connection with Chinese Communist affairs and Sino-Soviet relations, where other evidences are exceedingly scanty. In the cursory collection of data for this memorandum there appeared a strong, though not wholly unanimous, opinion that a more extensive acquisition and exploitation of Chinese Communist printed materials would be highly profitable to the total intelligence effort.

5. The principal other suggestion that came up in the course of preparing this memorandum appears to be more controversial. This was that a substantially greater effort be allocated to "content analysis" -- not necessarily to content analysis only in its narrowest sense, but rather to the technically skilled study of Bloc propaganda materials by persons whose full-time job this was. In short, that there be an increase

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in the kind of work presently carried on by the [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] There are strong proponents of this course, and there are others who contend that analysis of propaganda materials is best carried on as a part of the work of regional intelligence specialists, who devote themselves not in the exploitation of one source of information, but rather to the affairs of the country or region whence the information comes.

6. Should the IAC desire to pursue this subject further, it is recommended that the Chairman designate some qualified person to form a small committee, investigate the matter more thoroughly than has been done for this memorandum, and submit recommendations for action.

Abbot Smith

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